

Los Angeles rally backs South Korean workers' struggle

written by Struggle - La Lucha
January 13, 2022



Photos: Insook Lee



Peter Kim

In Los Angeles Jan. 8, progressive Korean American groups and allies rallied in solidarity with the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) and against the U.S. military occupation of South Korea. The Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice and the Socialist Unity Party were among the participating organizations. The following remarks were made by Korean American activist Peter Kim at the rally,

The KCTU, the largest trade union organization in South Korea, is organizing a major demonstration in Seoul on Jan. 15 under the slogan, "Let's overthrow inequality through general unity with the people!"

We are gathered here today as we did last October to support the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions' unstoppable general strike. We are here again to endorse and support the Jan. 15 nationwide people's rally hosted by the KCTU.

The term of office of the Moon Jae In regime in South Korea is ending soon. Despite public opposition, this is the regime that just pardoned former President Park Geun Hye, allowing her to receive security after his term ends.

When he became president, Moon Jae In said he would create an era of zero temporary workers, but the numbers of temporary workers have increased while he's been in office. During his campaign he promised to raise the minimum wage to \$8.30, but after five years it's still only \$7.60. With inflation, even \$10 isn't enough. Hard-working Koreans are suffering with low wages, long work hours and dangerous working conditions. They deserve better!

The chaebol [corporate monopolies] who committed these crimes are free and workers who gather to protest are arrested for violating COVID-19 prevention laws. The chaebol's in-house fund is about \$100 billion, but many workers and some young people end up wandering the streets due to low wages, soaring housing prices and unemployment.

There are too many broken promises from the Moon Jae In government. Using COVID-19 prevention as an excuse to lockdown the country, he ended up putting small businesses out of business and blocking the workers' right to protest and assemble, causing many to lose not only their jobs but their livelihood.

Moon Jae In also talked about the peace process with North Korea, but did nothing

to move those talks forward. Instead he spent an astronomical amount of money to import U.S. military weapons and support the U.S. military bases in Korea. He has not kept to his word in the last five years.

Sadly, there is no better option in the upcoming 2022 presidential election. Nobody talks about the workers and the welfare of the country, only about tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations.

Korean workers have had the highest suicide rate in the world for the past 16 years. The national birth rate is the lowest among 198 countries. The OECD ranks Korea second in the world in temporary workers, fourth in inequality and fifth in the youth unemployment rate. This is the reality of the world's 10th largest economy.

For all of these reasons, workers and young people, we must unite and fight. Nothing will change if we don't stand up to the systematic inequality in South Korea. Let's organize for the struggling workers and create change. Let's unite with the KCTU's rally on Jan. 15, 2022.





'Hey, hey, USA! How many bombs did you drop today?'

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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The Pentagon has finally published its first [Airpower Summary](#) since President Biden took office nearly a year ago. These monthly reports have been published since 2007 to document the number of bombs and missiles dropped by U.S.-led air forces in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria since 2004. But President Trump stopped publishing them after February 2020, shrouding continued U.S. bombing in secrecy.

Over the past 20 years, as documented in the table below, U.S. and allied air forces have dropped over 337,000 bombs and missiles on other countries. That is an average of 46 strikes per day for 20 years. This endless bombardment has not only been deadly and devastating for its victims but is broadly recognized as seriously undermining international peace and security and diminishing America's standing in the world.

The U.S. government and political establishment have been remarkably successful at

keeping the American public in the dark about the horrific consequences of these long-term campaigns of mass destruction, allowing them to maintain the illusion of U.S. militarism as a force for good in the world in their domestic political rhetoric.

Now, even in the face of the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, they are doubling down on their success at selling this counterfactual narrative to the American public to reignite their old Cold War with Russia and China, dramatically and predictably increasing the risk of nuclear war.

The new [Airpower Summary](#) data reveal that the United States has dropped another 3,246 bombs and missiles on Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria (2,068 under Trump and 1,178 under Biden) since February 2020.

The good news is that U.S. bombing of those 3 countries has significantly decreased from the over 12,000 bombs and missiles it dropped on them in 2019. In fact, since the withdrawal of U.S. occupation forces from Afghanistan in August, the U.S. military has officially conducted no air strikes there, and only dropped 13 bombs or missiles on Iraq and Syria - although this does not preclude additional unreported strikes by forces under CIA command or control.

Presidents Trump and Biden both deserve credit for recognizing that endless bombing and occupation could not deliver victory in Afghanistan. The speed with which the U.S.-installed government fell to the Taliban once the U.S. withdrawal was under way confirmed how 20 years of hostile military occupation, aerial bombardment and support for corrupt governments ultimately served only to drive the war-weary people of Afghanistan back to Taliban rule.

Biden's callous decision to follow 20 years of colonial occupation and aerial bombardment in Afghanistan with the same kind of brutal economic siege warfare the United States has inflicted on Cuba, Iran, North Korea and Venezuela can only further discredit America in the eyes of the world.

There has been no accountability for these 20 years of senseless destruction. Even with the publication of Airpower Summaries, the ugly reality of U.S. bombing wars and the mass casualties they inflict remain largely hidden from the American people.

How many of the 3,246 attacks documented in the Airpower Summary since February 2020 were you aware of before reading this article? You probably heard about the drone strike that killed 10 Afghan civilians in Kabul in August 2021. But what about the other 3,245 bombs and missiles? Whom did they kill or maim, and whose homes did they destroy?

The December 2021 *New York Times* [exposé](#) of the consequences of U.S. airstrikes, the result of a five-year investigation, was stunning not only for the high civilian casualties and military lies it exposed, but also because it revealed just how little investigative reporting the U.S. media have done on these two decades of war.

In America's industrialized, remote-control air wars, even the U.S. military personnel most directly and intimately involved are shielded from human contact with the people whose lives they are destroying, while for most of the American public, it is as if these hundreds of thousands of deadly explosions never even happened.

The lack of public awareness of U.S. airstrikes is not the result of a lack of concern for the mass destruction our government commits in our names. In the rare cases we find out about, like the murderous drone strike in Kabul in August, the public wants to know what happened and strongly supports U.S. accountability for civilian deaths.

So public ignorance of 99% of U.S. air strikes and their consequences is not the result of public apathy, but of deliberate decisions by the U.S. military, politicians of both parties and corporate media to keep the public in the dark. The largely unremarked 21-month-long suppression of monthly Airpower Summaries is only the latest example of this.

Now that the new Airpower Summary has filled in the previously hidden figures for 2020-21, here is the most complete data available on 20 years of deadly and destructive U.S. and allied air strikes.

Numbers of bombs and missiles dropped on other countries by the United States and its allies since 2001:

	Iraq (& Syria*)	Afghanistan	Yemen	Other Countries**
2001	<u>214</u>	<u>17,500</u>		
2002	<u>252</u>	<u>6,500</u>	1	
2003	<u>29,200</u>			
2004	<u>285</u>	<u>86</u>		1 (<u>Pk</u>)
2005	<u>404</u>	<u>176</u>		3 (<u>Pk</u>)
2006	<u>310</u>	<u>2,644</u>		7,002 (<u>Le,Pk</u>)
2007	<u>1,708</u>	<u>5,198</u>		9 (<u>Pk,S</u>)
2008	<u>1,075</u>	<u>5,215</u>		40 (<u>Pk,S</u>)
2009	<u>126</u>	4,184	3	5,554 (<u>Pk,Pl</u>)
2010	<u>8</u>	5,126	2	128 (<u>Pk</u>)
2011	<u>4</u>	5,411	13	7,763 (<u>Li,Pk,S</u>)
2012		4,083	41	54 (<u>Li,Pk,S</u>)
2013		2,758	22	32 (<u>Li,Pk,S</u>)

2014	6,292*	2,365	20	5,058 (Li , Pl , Pk , S)
2015	28,696*	947	14,191	28 (Li , Pk , S)
2016	30,743*	1,337	14,549	529 (Li , Pk , S)
2017	39,577*	4,361	15,969	301 (Li , Pk , S)
2018	8,713*	7,362	9,746	84 (Li , Pk , S)
2019	4,729*	7,423	3,045	65 (Li , S)
2020	1,188*	1,631	7,622	54 (S)
2021	554*	801	4,428	1,512 (Pl , S)
Total	154, 078*	85,108	69,652	28,217

Grand Total = 337,055 bombs and missiles.

***Other Countries: Lebanon, Libya, Pakistan, Palestine, Somalia.*

These figures are based on U.S. [Airpower Summaries](#) for Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria; the Bureau of Investigative Journalism's count of [drone strikes](#) in Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen; the [Yemen Data Project's](#) count of bombs and missiles dropped on Yemen (only through September 2021); the New America Foundation's database of [foreign air strikes](#) in Libya; and other sources.

There are several categories of air strikes that are not included in this table, meaning that the true numbers of weapons unleashed are certainly higher. These include:

Helicopter strikes: Military Times published [an article in February 2017](#) titled, "The U.S. military's stats on deadly air strikes are wrong. Thousands have gone

unreported.” The largest pool of air strikes not included in U.S. Airpower Summaries are strikes by attack helicopters. The U.S. Army told the authors its helicopters had conducted 456 otherwise unreported air strikes in Afghanistan in 2016. The authors explained that the non-reporting of helicopter strikes has been consistent throughout the post-9/11 wars, and they still did not know how many missiles were fired in those 456 attacks in Afghanistan in the one year they investigated.

AC-130 gunships: The U.S. military did not destroy the Doctors Without Borders hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan, in 2015 with bombs or missiles, but with a Lockheed-Boeing AC-130 gunship. These machines of mass destruction, usually manned by U.S. Air Force special operations forces, are designed to circle a target on the ground, pouring howitzer shells and cannon fire into it until it is completely destroyed. The U.S. has used AC-130s in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, and Syria.

Strafing runs: U.S. Airpower Summaries for 2004-2007 included a note that their tally of “strikes with munitions dropped... does not include 20mm and 30mm cannon or rockets.” But the 30mm cannons on A-10 Warthogs and other ground attack planes are powerful weapons, originally designed to destroy Soviet tanks. A-10s can fire 65 depleted uranium shells per second to blanket an area with deadly and indiscriminate fire. But that does not appear to count as a “weapons release” in U.S. Airpower Summaries.

“Counter-insurgency” and “counter-terrorism” operations in other parts of the world: The United States formed a military coalition with 11 West African countries in 2005, and has built a drone base in Niger, but we have not found any systematic accounting of U.S. and allied air strikes in that region, or in the Philippines, Latin America or elsewhere.

The failure of the U.S. government, politicians and corporate media to honestly inform and educate the American public about the systematic mass destruction

wreaked by our country's armed forces has allowed this carnage to continue largely unremarked and unchecked for 20 years.

It has also left us precariously vulnerable to the revival of an anachronistic, Manichean Cold War narrative that risks even greater catastrophe. In this topsy-turvy, "through the looking glass" narrative, the country actually bombing [cities to rubble](#) and waging wars that [kill millions](#) of people, presents itself as a well-intentioned force for good in the world. Then it paints countries like China, Russia and Iran, which have understandably strengthened their defenses to deter the United States from attacking them, as threats to the American people and to world peace.

The [high-level talks](#) beginning on January 10th in Geneva between the United States and Russia are a critical opportunity, maybe even a last chance, to rein in the escalation of the current Cold War before this breakdown in East-West relations becomes irreversible or devolves into a military conflict.

If we are to emerge from this morass of militarism and avoid the risk of an apocalyptic war with Russia or China, the U.S. public must challenge the counterfactual Cold War narrative that U.S. military and civilian leaders are peddling to justify their ever-increasing investments in nuclear weapons and the U.S. war machine.

Medea Benjamin is cofounder of [CODEPINK for Peace](#), and author of several books, including [Inside Iran: The Real History and Politics of the Islamic Republic of Iran](#).

Nicolas J. S. Davies is an independent journalist, a researcher with CODEPINK and the author of [Blood on Our Hands: The American Invasion and Destruction of Iraq](#).



Why Kazakhstan exploded

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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What is happening now in Kazakhstan, a popular uprising or another “color revolution”? At the moment, users of Ukrainian social networks are actively discussing this issue.

Despite all the differences, we are very similar in our social, economic and political systems – Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Armenia, Russia, Belarus. After all, we all came out of one overcoat of the former USSR. That is why we rightly compare the crisis processes in our countries.

All “Maidans” – that is, large-scale protests that have taken place in our countries – had different triggers, but they were always due to the same underlying social reasons. So many active people would not go out to protest merely for cookies.

The first Kazakh workers’ Maidan took place in 2011 in the city of Zhanaozen, which is the epicenter of today’s explosion. This also had social reasons.

There are deep contradictions between the capital that has merged with state

power, on the one hand, and the mass of social groups exploited by it, on the other. These contradictions are the foundation of Maidans in all our countries.

With all the Maidans, there is a problem that arises objectively – whether anyone wants it or not – and it is that members of the ruling class use the situation to fulfill their own needs.

Maidans turn into color revolutions when the result is a change of the president's name without changing the conditions that gave rise to the protests. That is, without changing the bankrupt social system of capitalism.

The result of these inter-elite chess moves is the strengthening of the omnipotence of national and transnational capital, the strengthening of the authoritarian regime (only with another figurehead), the suppression of civil liberties, more IMF bondage, and the final loss of independence for the country.

Ukraine after 2014 is a striking and sad example of this development.

However, in reality, another result is possible, and that is for the Maidan to change not only the president and the government, but eventually the social system itself via the overthrow of capitalism. Only thus will the root causes of social protest be removed.

It all depends on who is able to shape the agenda of the protest movement.

In Ukraine in 2014, or in Belarus in 2020, the agenda was shaped by the local nationalist and neoliberal bourgeoisie, far-right and Western-dependent “grant eaters.” And now in Kazakhstan, the pro-Western opposition is talking about two ways that protests can go:

“The country can go along two paths: revolution (topple and put everyone in jail) or urgent reforms – political and economic,” it states in social networks.

Surely, Kazakh grant-eaters want the latter path out of the dilemma: “The second legitimate path requires the dissolution of parliament, the dissolution of the ruling Nur Otan party, the deprivation of all immunities of [former president] Nazarbayev and his family members, rapid political reforms by presidential decrees, registration of opposition parties and the organization of parliamentary elections on a 50/50 basis. Then we need to carry out a constitutional reform.”

In fact, this plan offers the Kazakhs a redistribution of power without any social change. This is what happened during the events in Ukraine.

The way things will really go in Kazakhstan depends on whether the workers of Zhanaozen and other Kazakh cities, shot down in 2011, can unite. Will they be able to create a left-wing political entity and develop their own social program, avoiding the influence of the right-wing “opposition”? This is very important, but, as we understand, it is very difficult.

However, there is no other way out. Capitalist exploitation and “market reforms” are the real causes of the Kazakh Maidan. And the movement’s goal should be to eliminate these factors, not the redistribution of power among financial and political groups.

Everything that is happening in Kazakhstan today has direct analogs in Ukraine and other post-Soviet countries. And since social problems in Ukraine have not disappeared, but only intensified during the post-Maidan regime, we are also facing new popular uprisings.

Like it or not, the Maidan will objectively arise – because neither the parliamentary way nor elections can solve social contradictions.

The main thing is that it must be a social Maidan – a social revolution, which cannot be confused with its political imitations in the interests of the imperialists and

oligarchs.

We cannot go on living as we do today. But we don't need market reforms, we need social change.

Translated by Greg Butterfield

Source: [Liva.com.ua](https://liva.com.ua)



Socialist Movement of Kazakhstan calls for international solidarity

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In a statement about the large-scale mobilizations and protests in the former Soviet republic, the [Socialist Movement of Kazakhstan](#) calls for international solidarity with the demonstrators and demands the withdrawal of troops from the cities, the resignation of all Nazarbayev officials, the release of all political prisoners and detainees, the legalization of the Communist Party and trade unions, as well as the

nationalization of [Kazakhstan's](#) entire extractive and large-scale industry.

Jan. 6 - In Kazakhstan, there is now a real popular uprising. From the very beginning the protests were of a social and class nature, since the doubling of the price of liquefied gas on the exchange was just the last straw in an overflowing cup of patience. After all, the demonstrations began precisely in Zhanaozen at the initiative of the oil workers, which became a kind of political headquarters of the entire protest movement.

And the dynamics of this movement is indicative, since it began as a social protest, it then began to expand, and labor collectives used rallies to put forward their own demands for a 100% increase in wages, cancellation of optimization results, improvement of working conditions and freedom of trade union activity. As a result, on Jan. 3, the entire Mangistau region was engulfed in a general strike, which spread to the neighboring Atyrau region.

It is noteworthy that already on Jan. 4, Tengizchevroil oil workers went on strike, where the participation of American companies reaches 75%. It was there that last December 40,000 workers were laid off and a new series of layoffs was planned. They were subsequently supported during the day by the oil workers of Aktobe and West Kazakhstan and Kyzylorda regions.

Moreover, in the evening of the same day, strikes of miners from the ArcelorMittal Temirtau company began in the Karaganda region and copper smelters and miners from the Kazakhmys corporation, which can already be regarded as a general strike in the entire mining industry of the country. And here they also put forward demands for higher wages, lowering the retirement age, the right to their own trade unions and strikes.

At the same time, indefinite rallies on Tuesday began in Atyrau, Uralsk, Aktyubinsk, Kyzyl-Orda, Taraz, Taldykorgan, Turkestan, Shymkent, Ekibastuz, in the cities of the

Almaty region and in Almaty itself, where the occupation of streets began on the night of Jan. 4-5 in an open clash of demonstrators with the police, as a result of which the city akimat (city hall) was temporarily seized. This gave rise to President Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev declaring a state of emergency.

It should be noted that these mobilizations in Almaty were attended mainly by unemployed youth and internal migrants living in the suburbs of the metropolis and working in temporary or low-paid jobs. And attempts to calm them down with promises by reducing the gas price to 50 tenge, separately for the Mangistau region and Almaty, have not satisfied anyone.

The decision of Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev to dismiss the government, and then removing former President Nursultan Nazarbayev from the post of chairman of the Security Council, also did not stop the protests, since on Jan. 5, mass protest rallies began in those regional centers of Northern and Eastern Kazakhstan, where they had not previously existed - in Petropavlovsk, Pavlodar, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Semipalatinsk. At the same time, attempts were made to storm the buildings of regional akimats (provincial governments) in Aktobe, Taldykorgan, Shymkent and Almaty.

In Zhanaozen itself, at their indefinite rally, workers formulated new demands - the resignation of the incumbent president and all Nazarbayev officials, the restoration of the 1993 Constitution and the associated freedoms to create parties, trade unions, release political prisoners and end repression. A council of aksakals (elders) was immediately created, which became an informal authority.

Thus, the demands and slogans that are now used in different cities and regions were broadcast to the entire movement, and the struggle received political content. Attempts are also being made on the ground to create committees and councils to coordinate the struggle.

At the same time, troops were pulled together in Almaty, Aktau and Zhanaozen, and if everything went peacefully in the Mangistau region and the soldiers refused to disperse the protesters, then shootings began in the southern capital, and on the night of Jan. 5-6, special forces were introduced, which began cleanup of the airport and neighborhoods captured by the rebels. According to various sources, there are already dozens of demonstrators killed.

In this situation, there is a danger of violent suppression of all protests and strikes, and here it is necessary to completely paralyze the country with a general strike. Therefore, it is urgent to form unified action committees on a territorial and production basis in order to provide organized resistance to military and police terror.

In this regard, the support of the entire international workers' and communist movement and leftist associations is also necessary in order to organize a large-scale campaign around the world.

The Socialist Movement of Kazakhstan demands:

An immediate end to hostilities against our people and the withdrawal of troops from the cities!

Immediate resignation of all Nazarbayev officials, including President Tokayev!

Release of all political prisoners and detainees!

Ensuring the right for workers to create their own trade unions, political parties, to hold strikes and meetings!

Legalization of the activities of the banned Communist Party of Kazakhstan and the Socialist Movement of Kazakhstan!

We call on all the workers and laboring people of the country to implement in practice the demand of the executed oil workers of Zhanaozen - to nationalize, under the control of labor collectives, the entire extractive and large-scale industry of the country!

[Translation by In Defense of Communism](#)



Right-wing hate speech runs rampant in India's elections

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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A bizarre event took place in northern India between December 17 and December 19, 2021. It was a “[religious parliament](#)” (*Dharma Sansad*) with the theme, “The Future of the *Sanatan Dharma* in Islamic India: Problem and Solutions.” The event took place in Haridwar, a city in the Indian state of Uttarakhand. The speakers—each of them dressed in saffron robes, which are usually worn by Hindu monks—took to the stage during the *Dharma Sansad* and spoke in a startlingly

dangerous and provocative fashion. Sadhvi Annapurna, the general secretary of the Hindu Mahasabha, a right-wing Hindu nationalist outfit in India, was the most forthright in spelling out the agenda of hatred against the Muslim community that marked the tone for this event. “Nothing is possible without weapons,” she [said](#). “If you want to eliminate their [the Muslim] population, then we are ready to kill them.”

The reference to “their” and “them” in her speech was clear to everyone in the room and anyone who watched her clip, which circulated widely on social media and on television channels in India. Sadhvi Annapurna was referring to the 204 million Muslims of India. “Even if 100 of us are ready to kill 20 lakh [2 million] of them, then we will be victorious and are ready to go to jail,” she [said](#).

Despite calls by some sections of society, including a [group](#) of retired government officials, to investigate and arrest the organizers and speakers of the *Dharma Sansad* for making these provocative hate speeches, the police in the state of Uttarakhand did not take any “serious action” against those who tried to incite violence through this event, stated government officials in a letter they [sent](#) to Uttarakhand’s Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami “condemning his government’s response” to the *Dharma Sansad*. Uttarakhand is governed by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), whose leader Narendra Modi is the prime minister of India.

Meanwhile, Dhami did not make any statements against the event, although [photographs](#) of him bowing before one of the speakers at the conclave appeared to suggest a close association with the people involved in organizing the event. That speaker in the photograph, Swami Prabodhananda Giri, the head of the Hindu Raksha Sena, a right-wing organization based out of Uttarakhand, [said](#) at the gathering, “Every Hindu must pick up weapons, and we will have to conduct this cleanliness drive.” It is clear that the association of “weapons” with “cleanliness” refers to the kind of ethnic or religious cleansing witnessed during various periods in history, including the Holocaust during World War II.

Elections and hate

Between February and March 2022, [three](#) key north India states are expected to go to the polls; among these states is Uttarakhand. The other two states—Uttar Pradesh and Punjab—are key to the fortunes of the ruling BJP, which will see its popularity tested after Modi had to [withdraw](#) three farm bills on November 19, 2021. Farmer unrest in both Punjab and Uttar Pradesh led to a year-long protest campaign that soured the reputation of the BJP in these two states and has created the possibility of new electoral maps being drawn in both these states in India. Uttar Pradesh (which has a population of approximately 200 million) is India's most populous state, and the fortunes of the BJP there will determine the authority of Modi's government in Delhi, India's capital and the central government's seat of power. A defeat in Uttar Pradesh, or even a reduced majority, would give the opposition greater confidence to challenge Modi's fiat approach to policymaking and to counter the right-wing ideology propagated by the BJP.

Currently, the BJP dominates the state assembly in Uttar Pradesh (it won 312 out of the 403 seats in the [assembly elections](#) of 2017). The atmosphere in Uttar Pradesh [remains](#) tense for minorities (around [19 percent](#) of the population in the state are Muslims), largely because various Hindu right-wing organizations—such as those represented at the religious conclave—have stoked the fires of hatred against the Muslim minority for generations. As part of its vote-gathering arsenal, the BJP has developed a [strategy](#) to provoke religious violence, polarize the population, and ensure that the majority Hindu vote gathers under its banner. This is what the BJP did to succeed in the 2014 general elections, before which local party officials [engineered](#) a pogrom in the town of Muzaffarnagar in August to September 2013 that resulted in the [death](#) of more than 60 people and left thousands of others displaced. In the aftermath of that violence, BJP leader—and now home minister of India (responsible for law and order in the country)—Amit Shah in 2014 [told](#) a crowd in Shamli in western Uttar Pradesh that the general election, which eventually led to

the BJP seizing power in India, was about honor, and was “an election to take revenge for the insult” and “to teach a lesson to those who have committed injustice.”

In November 2021, the Samajwadi Party and the Rashtriya Lok Dal (National People’s Party) [formed](#) an alliance for the Uttar Pradesh legislative elections. The Samajwadi Party had governed the state from 2012 to 2017 under the leadership of former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav. The Rashtriya Lok Dal, meanwhile, brings heft in the western districts of Uttar Pradesh, where the farmers’ agitation had the greatest impact. This combination threatens the BJP’s divisive agenda. It is likely that more events like the *Dharma Sansad* focused on spreading and strengthening religious hate in Uttar Pradesh will be on offer to polarize the electorate to the benefit of the BJP.

Sewers of hate

The religious conclave held in December 2021 suggested that there was a threat to Hindus in “[Islamic India](#).” This is a theme that goes back to the 19th century, when leaders of the Hindu right wing began to say that Hinduism was being threatened by, among other things, the rising [birth rate](#) of Muslims. Facts apart, this idea festered in the sewers of right-wing thought continues to find favor in the currents within the BJP, such as Shah, who had [described](#) the minority Muslim population of Uttar Pradesh as the people “who have committed injustice.” To [refer](#) to India as “Islamic” is part of the exaggerated paranoia, a festivity of hatred that results in violence and in the consolidation of political power for the BJP.

Rather than face arrest for their hate speech, the men and women who spoke at the assembly filed a complaint with the police [against](#) “maulanas or clerics” and “the Quran, maulvis [Islamic scholars] of Haridwar and other unnamed Muslims.” Sadhvi Annapurna, who had called for the murder of Muslims, is heard in a [video](#) posted on Twitter on December 28, 2021, telling a police officer to “show us that you are not

biased.” Yati Narsinghanand, who organized the religious conclave, interjects to say that the police officer is “biased and on our side.” Following the religious conclave in Haridwar, 21 “Hindu monks” who participated in the conclave formed a committee to hold more of these meetings and to “convert India into a ‘Hindu Rashtra’ [state].” “You [the Hindus in India] can fight them only with arms,” the monks said, with no need to elaborate on whom they meant during their reference to “them.”

Democracy in India is wounded by the acidic legacy of the Hindu right wing, which thrives on intimidation and false pride as the fuel for its success. The farmers’ agitation offered an alternative path. The two roads will be tested in these legislative elections expected to take place in early 2022.

This article was produced by [Globetrotter](#). Vijay Prashad is an Indian historian, editor and journalist. He is a writing fellow and chief correspondent at Globetrotter. He is the chief editor of [LeftWord Books](#) and the director of [Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research](#). He is a senior non-resident fellow at [Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies](#), Renmin University of China. He has written more than 20 books, including [The Darker Nations](#) and [The Poorer Nations](#). His latest book is [Washington Bullets](#), with an introduction by Evo Morales Ayma.



‘We are still living in the shadow of the defeat of the USSR’

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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The following interview with Struggle-La Lucha co-editor Greg Butterfield was originally published by the website Ukraina.ru as part of a retrospective series on the 30th anniversary of the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991.

Dmitry Strauss: On Dec. 30, 1991, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev announced his resignation, marking the end point in the history of the USSR. What were you doing in those days, what were your political views? Did you support the process of the disintegration of the USSR or were you against it?

Greg Butterfield: In 1991 I was a young communist activist. I had moved from the U.S. Midwest to New York City a year before. I was working as the assistant to Marxist theoretician and organizer Sam Marcy, who had recently written a [critical analysis of Gorbachev’s “perestroika” program](#) and its likely consequences. At this time Marcy was beginning to gain attention within the international communist

movement as one of the few serious Marxist critics of Gorbachev and his treacherous collaboration with U.S. imperialism. So I was very fortunate as a young activist to help Marcy with research for his articles at that critical moment in history. It was a great learning experience.

Beginning in August 1991, when the [State Emergency Committee](#) attempted to halt the worst of the counterrevolutionary “reforms,” through Boris Yeltsin’s first visit to the U.S., and then the “Black October” events in Moscow in 1993, our comrades organized many street protests and educational meetings in New York, San Francisco and other cities. We picketed the Russian Mission to the United Nations to protest the arrests of the State Emergency Committee members, the banning of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Pravda, and later the massacre of the defenders of the House of Soviets. I participated in all of the New York actions.

Thirty years later, I’m proud that I was on the right side of history in defending the Soviet Union and socialism.

DS: What do you think about the current situation in so-called post-Soviet states?

GB: The destruction of the USSR was the greatest setback for the global working class since the crushing of the Paris Commune. The burden of that defeat has fallen hardest on the peoples of the former Soviet countries. We know about the calamitous events of the 1990s, when the life expectancy of people in Russia and other Soviet lands fell at the fastest rate in history outside of wartime. We watched as the tremendous achievements of Soviet industry, built up by the common effort of the workers, were sold off piecemeal or allowed to crumble to dust. And workers and professionals educated under socialism were forced to emigrate and sell their skilled labor for low wages in the West.

Today, none of the post-Soviet states has come close to achieving the economic and living standards of Soviet times. A few people have gotten very rich, many have

fallen into poverty, and most workers struggle on the edge of disaster – just like in every capitalist country. Some of the post-Soviet states have become neocolonial subjects of U.S. imperialism and the European Union. Those that have tried to maintain their independence are subject to sanctions, constant threats of war and “color revolutions.”

DS: Thirty years after the disintegration of the USSR, there is a new geopolitical conflict between the USA and Russia fighting for their hegemony in the world. China and the European Union actively participate in this process. Do you think these processes are somehow related to the disintegration of the USSR or not? If you think they are related, then in what way?

GB: Absolutely! The conflict between the U.S.-NATO and Russia, and that between the U.S. and China, are a direct result of the USSR's destruction.

Russia inherited the nuclear defense capabilities built up by the Soviet Union. Once the new oligarchic capitalist class of Russia got to its feet – with the first election of Vladimir Putin – they believed they could be recognized as an equal by Washington and the European imperialists. They thought they would be welcomed into the club. But this was not the case. The imperialists, particularly in the U.S., did not want to open up space to the Russian novices; they wanted only to continue the neocolonial relationship that existed under Boris Yeltsin.

In my view, modern Russia is not an imperialist power, despite the pretensions of some of its political elites. The idea that Russia is an existential threat to the U.S. is a myth built up by the West for purposes of expanding NATO and getting public support for new military adventures. But the Western ruling classes actually see the Russian Federation the same way they see the smaller post-Soviet states – as a potential source of raw materials and cheap labor.

In 1992, that is, immediately after the dissolution of the USSR, a Pentagon policy

document was published by the New York Times. It explained that the long-term U.S. perspective was to prevent the rise of any new competitor at the level of the Soviet Union. In particular, in the cases of China and Russia, the policy would be to work toward breaking up these large states to make them easier to control politically and to digest economically. For 30 years, under both Democratic and Republican administrations, this outlook of the U.S. ruling class has not changed.

Today, we see how this imperialist outlook is leading inevitably toward a new large-scale military conflict – one that could quickly engulf the whole world.

DS: The collapse of the USSR led to the creation of the so-called unipolar world, which lives according to the patterns defined by the U.S. government. From your point of view, what is positive and what is negative in this unipolar world system?

GB: I can't think of any positive qualities of this situation. The U.S. unipolar system has been an unmitigated disaster for the people of the world.

The USSR, despite its political shortcomings from a revolutionary viewpoint in the post-Lenin era, was nevertheless a bulwark of the global people's movements – of workers, of national liberation struggles, of civil and human rights everywhere. The very existence of this socialist powerhouse that united many nationalities in peaceful common work was a tremendous argument in favor of socialism. It helped to force capitalist countries to raise the living standards of workers and grant civil rights. It provided material and diplomatic support to anti-colonial struggles and governments that wanted to be independent.

In contrast, U.S. unipolar rule has meant the fall of living standards and loss of rights for the working class and oppressed people in both rich and poor countries. Here in the U.S., we have suffered three decades of setbacks to union rights, voting rights of Black people, the basic rights of women and other oppressed groups. Every worker in the world was materially harmed by the destruction of the USSR, whether

they realized it or not, and we continue to be harmed by it today.

Since the election of Hugo Chavez in Venezuela in 1999, there have been several bright spots that show the struggle for socialism is destined to reemerge. But up to now these are still premonitions of future victories. We are still living and struggling in the shadow of the USSR's defeat.

DS: Based on your personal experience, in the last two decades, why have there been so many wars? What is the force that generates them? Why hasn't the world become more harmonious, more humane and more compassionate since the collapse of the USSR?

GB: The U.S. ruling class promised workers a "peace dividend" after the destruction of the Soviet Union. This never came to pass, and never could.

Capitalist imperialism, as Lenin explained so eloquently more than a century ago, is constantly driven to war to expand its markets and redivide the world. For decades the power of the USSR was a check on this unbridled imperialist war drive. Without the giant socialist state to reckon with, the imperialist war drive was unleashed, leading to the unprecedented "endless wars" from the invasion of Iraq with Gorbachev's cooperation in 1991 up to this day.

It does not take any special understanding of Marxism to see that the level of U.S. aggression today toward Russia and China will inevitably lead to a new and devastating world war – unless the global working class is able to stop it by revolutionary means. This war drive is completely connected to the destruction of the world climate and the resurgence of fascist tendencies around the world. Our foremost task as revolutionaries is to build the movement to defeat them.

DS: Finally, are there any other topics that I may have missed and you consider to be important about the collapse of the USSR?

GB: I would like to take the opportunity to draw attention to the antifascist struggle of the people of the Donbass republics since 2014. Their ongoing fight against the U.S.-Ukrainian forces of reaction is a bright red star shining in the former Soviet lands. The tremendous sacrifices of people in Donetsk, Lugansk, and inside Ukraine itself, show that the Soviet people can and will win again.

Source: Ukraina.ru



Destruction of the Soviet Union: a crime without statute of limitations

written by Struggle - La Lucha

January 13, 2022

Statement of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the United Communist Party of Russia (OKP) in connection with the 30th anniversary of the unconstitutional liquidation of the USSR in December 1991.

In December 1991, the largest state on the planet, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the first ever socialist state of workers and peasants, disappeared from

the political map of the world.

In the context of the general crisis of Gorbachev's "perestroika" policy, few people paid attention to the blatant violation of all conceivable and inconceivable constitutional procedures during the "dissolution" of the united socialist homeland. In its swiftness, it resembled either the shameful flight from the sinking ship of the completely bankrupt political elite of the "perestroika-reformers" headed by President Gorbachev, or the finale of a carefully planned action designed to put an end to the history of Soviet socialism, which was played out like clockwork before the eyes of the disoriented and disorganized Soviet people.

There is no doubt that at the time of the proclamation of "perestroika," Soviet society needed changes, but at every turn the rational renewal of the country on the basis of socialism was opposed by voluntarist innovations in the spirit of the convergence of the socialist and capitalist systems. Thus, instead of scientifically grounded improvement of the Soviet command-distribution planning system, experiments were imposed on society to introduce capitalist market mechanisms into the socialist economy with the orientation of the entire national economic complex of the country towards the priority of profit, and, consequently, the formation of a system of consumer relations.

This, in turn, created fertile ground for manifestations of individual and collective egoism, the shadow economy, the social differentiation of Soviet society — shameful social phenomena that discredited Soviet socialism in the eyes of the working people. Obvious failures in the ideological sphere and the transformation of the ruling Communist Party of Soviet Union from the political vanguard of society into a bureaucratic mechanism of government led to the depoliticization of communists and non-party people, to people's disbelief in the proclaimed slogans and ideals, and contributed to the growth of social apathy and cynicism.

Taken together, the above circumstances and phenomena contributed to the

formation of conditions for internal counterrevolution, expanded its social base, thereby facilitating the subversive activities of the forces of international reaction and anti-communism against the USSR and the socialist bloc. The policy of "perestroika," designed to eradicate these tendencies according to Gorbachev's assurances, carried out without a proper systematic approach, by the empirical method of trial and error, quickly moved from the stage of renewal of socialism to its actual dismantling. The events of August 1991 removed the last barriers to the forces that openly advocated the elimination of the socialist system and the Soviet Union itself, which makes us speak not so much about the spontaneous disintegration of the system, but about completely controlled and clearly coordinated processes.

It is important to recall an extremely important circumstance, which proves in the most irrefutable way that the liquidation of the USSR was neither a historical accident, nor a natural consequence of the economic "bankruptcy of the system," as both "systemic" and "non-systemic" liberals like to say today. At the time of the signing of the unconstitutional "Belovezh Accords" [Dec. 8, 1991] and the resignation of Soviet President Gorbachev, practically all the top political and military leaders of the USSR were in the "Matrosskaya Tishina" pre-trial detention center facing charges in the case of the so-called "State Emergency Committee." [This refers to the failed [August 1991 attempt to block the counterrevolution](#) by administrative measures.]

In their absence, the entire operational leadership of the largest state on the planet passed to the "Russian center" in the person of President of the RSFSR Yeltsin and the leaders of the "democratic" Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, which from the standpoint both of the the law and common sense was more like a creeping coup d'etat. The purpose of the latter was the final usurpation of the highest power in the RSFSR by the "group" of President Yeltsin, who by that time had entered into an open conspiracy with the national-separatist forces, which had seized key leadership

posts in most of the union republics of the USSR.

No less strange and clearly contrary to common sense was the very justification by the president of the Soviet Union of his own decree to resign from his high powers: "Due to the current situation with the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States." This wording was voiced in Gorbachev's address to the nation on Dec. 25, 1991, that is, exactly 17 days after the separatist "Bilovodsk" conspiracy between the heads of three subjects of the USSR [Russia, Ukraine and Belarus], as a result of which its participants announced the "termination" of the 1922 Treaty on the Formation of the USSR. And this despite the fact that the USSR was founded by at least four subjects, not three, and since the adoption of the first Constitution of the USSR in 1924, the Treaty on the Formation of the USSR ceased to be an independent legal document, becoming an integral part of the Basic Law of the Union State (that is, in the "Bilovodsk" putsch, a document that had no direct legal force for a long time was "terminated").

But more importantly, the actions of the three "Bilovodsk" signatories grossly contradicted the results of the March 1991 referendum on the preservation of the USSR, in which 76.4% of citizens strongly supported the preservation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. However, despite this, Gorbachev chose to "wash his hands" and not darken the celebration of the "victors" - on the afternoon of Dec. 25 (before Gorbachev's announcement of resignation) at a meeting of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, Yeltsin's henchmen pushed through the decision to remove from the official name of Soviet Russia the reference to soviets, the socialist nature of its socio-political system, and in the evening, just 38 minutes (!) after Gorbachev's statement, the state flag of the Soviet Union was hastily lowered from the main flagpole of the Kremlin, replaced by the "democratic" counterrevolutionary tricolor.

The Presidium of the Central Committee of the United Communist Party is convinced that such actions could not be the result of a historical "accident," just as they were

not historically inevitable, of which both the direct initiators and ordinary pogromists of the USSR are trying to convince us. The deliberate, primitive anti-Sovietism, which has long since set the teeth on edge, which even thirty years after the liquidation of Soviet socialism and the USSR regularly breaks through in the speeches of the main plenipotentiary representatives of the ruling political class in the country, best refutes any fabrications by opponents of the Soviet project about its alleged historical failure.

In conditions when, according to most of the main development indicators – from the economy to culture to healthcare — the present “post-Soviet” Russia, as well as any other former republics of the Union, have not reached the level of the last year of the existence of the USSR, such fabrications of the current “effective managers” cannot be explained by anything other than a political inferiority complex. That is why their complex is now and then compensated for either by strictly dosed state anti-Sovietism and anti-communism, or – when it is politically expedient — by the cynical flirtation of representatives of the oligarchic regime with symbols of the great Soviet past.

The Presidium of the Central Committee of the OKP, noting the unconditional positive shift in public sentiment in Russia towards leftist ideas, the Soviet project and the USSR, at the same time strongly disagrees with the attempt to turn such symbols and ideas into harmless icons to comfort the exploited. We are convinced that just as the very creation of the Soviet Union was the result of a real correlation of social and class forces of a particular historical period, so its potential for revival will also be due solely to the real struggle for the socialist reorganization of reality, which will be waged by the working masses themselves, both in today’s Russia, and in any other now separated “post-Soviet” country.

The history of the destruction of Soviet statehood and the USSR, which ended exactly thirty years ago with the signing of the criminal “Belovezh Accords” and the

no less criminal stance of President Gorbachev, is the clearest proof that one material force can be overturned only by a force similar to it, while law or constitution is nothing more than a reflection of the will of this or that ruling class in society. Exactly thirty years ago, in December 1991, such a force was on the side of the liquidators of the USSR and, as such, the subsequent denunciation (termination) of the “Belovezh” conspiracy, undertaken by the parliamentary opposition majority of the State Duma of the Russian Federation in March 1996, did not and could not change such an anti-socialist balance of forces in Russia or any other “post-Soviet” republic.

The era begun by the criminal demolition of the Soviet Union has been going on for three decades, and it can only be interrupted by a radical change in the balance of forces in modern Russian society. However, such a change is clearly not achieved by the mere “return” of Soviet passports or even “Soviet citizenship” alone. That is why the first step towards a real revival of the USSR is the return of property and power to the hands of the working majority in each of the states of the once united socialist space, the Sovietization and socialization of these states as a decisive condition for the new socialist integration of peoples.

The USSR is the future, but we need to fight for this future today!

Vladimir Lakeev

First Secretary of the Central Committee of the United Communist Party

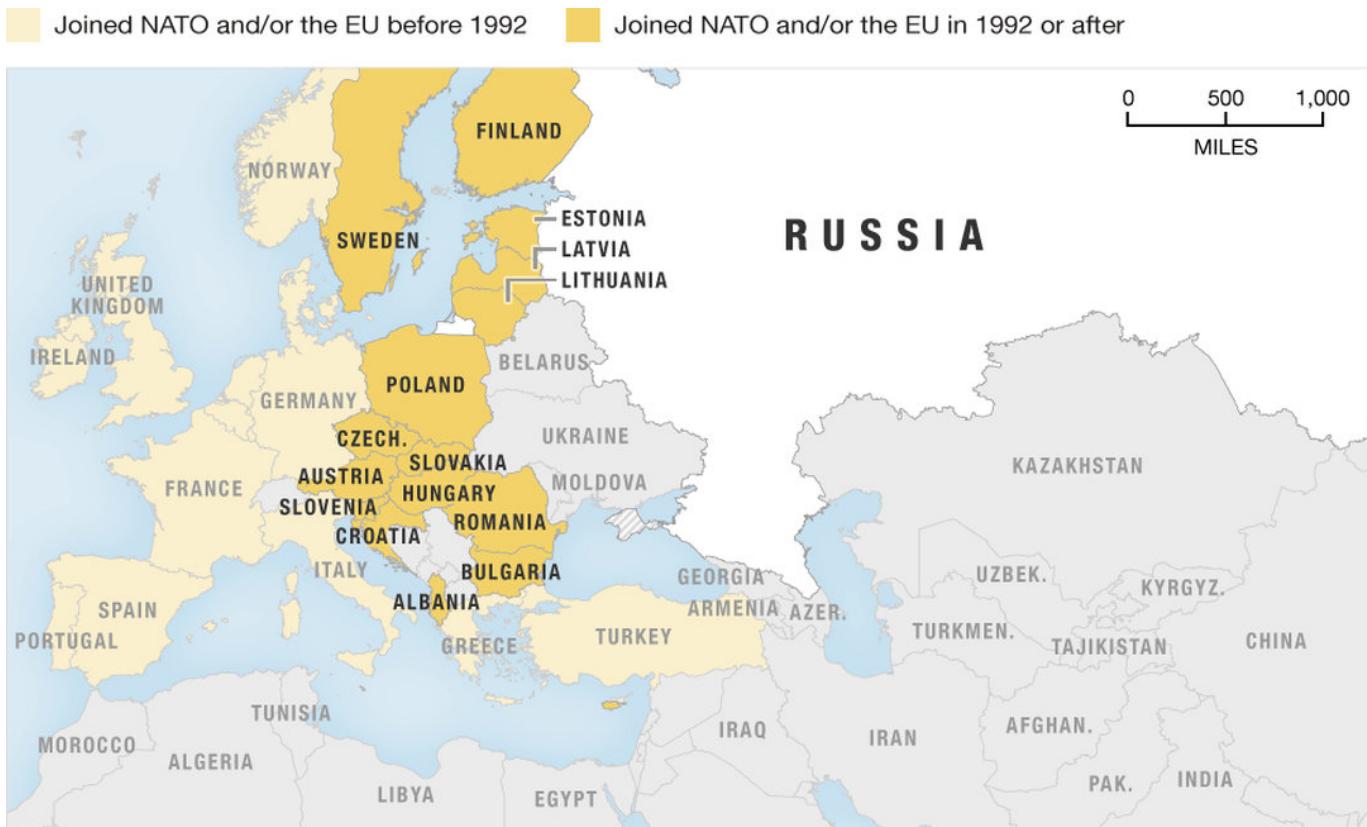
Source: United Communist Party

Translated by Greg Butterfield



No support for Ukrainian Rittenhouses! Hands off Donbass, Belarus and Russia

written by Struggle - La Lucha
January 13, 2022



Why is President Joe Biden's administration laser-focused on threatening war on the other side of the world, when the people of the United States are beset with life-threatening crises here at home?

Racist killer Kyle Rittenhouse was just acquitted, emboldening violent white supremacists across the U.S. Women's reproductive rights are under attack in many states and at the highest summit of the Supreme Court, which may soon overturn Roe v. Wade.

The COVID-19 pandemic is surging again, with the Delta and Omicron variants threatening new waves of death and further taxing the country's awful, mismanaged private healthcare system. Workers' rights are under attack from Amazon, Kellogg's and bosses across the board. The climate crisis continues to wreak havoc coast-to-coast.

These are a few of the life-and-death problems Biden needs to address. Workers and oppressed people did not give him their votes to start a war with Russia.

Biden's administration claims that 70,000 Russian troops guarding their country's Western border are a great threat to neighboring Ukraine. Seventy thousand Russian troops, that is, stationed **on Russia's own territory**.

On Dec. 3, Jeff Bezos' Washington Post, long an unofficial Pentagon mouthpiece, promoted a "declassified assessment" by national security officials claiming that Russia plans to invade Ukraine with 175,000 troops by the end of January.

This is at least the third time **this year** that Ukrainian and Western officials have made such a claim about an alleged Russian invasion. What sets this time apart is that the story started in Washington, not Kiev.

Last spring, NATO held its largest-ever war games in Europe, in regions bordering Russia, acting out scenarios that are now being promoted on computer and TV screens around the world.

The U.S. military has at least 750 military bases in 80 countries and hundreds of thousands of personnel stationed around the world. The U.S. spends more on its military than the next 10 countries combined. The Pentagon kills with impunity whenever and wherever it claims to see a threat to "U.S. national security" - whether in Africa or Western Asia or Latin America - destabilizing countries, often taking civilian lives intentionally or as "collateral damage."

Over the last 30 years, the U.S.-dominated NATO military alliance has steadily expanded eastward, swallowing 14 countries in Central and Eastern Europe, including several on Russia's Western borders. This despite a promise by the U.S. to Russia that NATO would not expand after the Cold War.

Ukraine is among three countries in the running to join NATO next. The U.S. first

promised Ukraine NATO membership in 2008 if its government would join the anti-Russia crusade. Russia has made it clear that a NATO takeover of Ukraine is a “red line” that threatens its sovereignty and security which must not be crossed.

Ukraine threatens Donetsk, Lugansk

Biden’s spokespersons don’t mention that [up to 125,000 Ukrainian troops](#) – half its total military! – are massed on the borders of the independent Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics, small countries sandwiched between Ukraine and Russia. Ukraine has been at war with them since 2014.

Ukraine claims these countries as its own territory, despite an overwhelming popular vote in a democratic referendum in favor of independence.

Ukraine is a party to the internationally-negotiated Minsk II agreements, which prohibit it from targeting civilians, using heavy weapons against the Donetsk and Lugansk republics or invading. [Yet Ukraine shells and shoots at the 140,000 inhabitants of frontline areas](#) constantly, causing daily deaths, injury and destruction. Washington and Kiev [deliberately block any progress](#) toward a negotiated settlement.

Ukraine’s war on the Donbass republics has gone on for seven and a half years, and has cost more than 14,000 lives.

The real danger of invasion is from Ukraine against Donetsk and Lugansk. Since 2014, Ukraine’s military has been trained, armed and reorganized by the U.S., Britain, Canada and other NATO countries. That includes the neo-Nazi “volunteer battalions” integrated into its official military structure.

The people of Donbass suffer under a complete economic blockade by Ukraine and its Western allies. Russia has provided humanitarian aid and trade to Donetsk and Lugansk at great cost, supplemented by support from antifascist organizations in the

former Soviet countries and the rest of the world.

A Ukrainian invasion of Donetsk and Lugansk would aim for maximum damage to infrastructure and civilian casualties – in hopes of provoking a military response from Russia. Then NATO would claim a “Russian invasion” to justify its war moves.

Antifascist resistance

Why did people in eastern Ukraine’s Donbass mining region choose independence? It happened after a U.S.-engineered coup brought a far-right-wing government to power in Kiev in 2014.

The coup was carried out by fascist gangs that were then set loose on the people of Donetsk and Lugansk and integrated into Ukraine’s military and security forces.

The U.S. wanted to bring NATO to Russia’s border then and there. Most of all, Washington wanted to seize the strategic military base on the Crimean peninsula, which would give NATO control of the Black Sea. The people of Crimea rejected that. So did the Russian government.

In Soviet times, Russia ceded Crimea to Ukraine, with a long-term Russian lease on the military base. In 2014, the Crimean people voted to return to Russia, and Russia agreed, thwarting the U.S. takeover of this strategic area.

Over 26 million Soviet people died fighting the Nazis in World War II. Seventy years later, they were not willing to live under neo-Nazi rule.

All of this happened during the Democratic Obama administration. Both Democrats and Republicans supported the far-right takeover of Ukraine and lied about a “Russian invasion” when the people of Donbass and Crimea asserted their right to separate.

And who was the Obama administration's point person on Ukraine? Who was calling the shots and handing out profitable favors to family members and business associates?

It was none other than Vice President Joe Biden.

Biden-Putin call

Biden held a widely-publicized two-hour [secure video call](#) with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Dec. 7. Biden threatened harsh economic sanctions, including cutting off Russia from the global banking system, as the U.S. has done to punish Iran.

Putin reiterated the Russian government's consistent position that NATO expansion into Ukraine is a "red line" for Russia's security. He said he hoped for further negotiations.

Why is Washington taking such a provocative stance toward Russia and making these threats now?

Big U.S. energy companies and banks want to stop the international Nord Stream II project that is set to bring Russian natural gas to Western Europe. U.S. capitalists are desperate to control energy profits and suppress any energy-supplying countries that defy Wall Street control - like Iran, Venezuela and Russia. U.S. companies want their European junior partners to buy energy from them and them alone.

That's the immediate play. But the U.S. has had its eyes on carving up the Russian Federation since the fall of the Soviet Union 30 years ago. A [Pentagon document leaked in 1992](#) laid out a long-term plan to rip apart Russia, destroy its sovereignty and make it a docile market and supplier of raw materials and skilled labor for Western big business. That's still the goal.

And then there's the fact that Biden and the Democrats are deeply mired in political crisis at home - unable to meet the basic needs and demands of the workers and oppressed people who they claim to represent, because they are beholden to the very capitalist system that thrives on racism, poverty and war.

Provoking a war is a time-honored U.S. method of distracting the masses of people in a time of great crisis.

Belarus, then Ukraine, next ... ?

The U.S. "warnings" (really, war propaganda) about a Russian invasion of Ukraine followed immediately on the heels of the November [border crisis between Belarus and Poland](#).

Thousands of refugees from Western and Central Asia and North Africa, fleeing the wreckage of U.S.-European wars in their homelands, went to Belarus, seeking to enter the European Union through Poland. The U.S.-dominated Polish government refused to let them through. The EU countries supported Poland in this gross violation of international human rights.

Polish troops mobilized at the border and abused refugees. The right-wing regimes in Lithuania and Ukraine also sent troops to the border with Belarus. None of this could have happened without NATO's (and therefore, Washington's) express consent and encouragement.

Belarus is an ally of Russia. The countries recently strengthened their military ties after an [attempted Ukraine-style coup](#) failed in Belarus. The events on the Polish border had all the earmarks of NATO trying to provoke a war crisis.

The EU countries refused to even hold a conversation about the refugees. Finally, Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko put his foot down. He said that if Poland and its allies provoked a war, Belarus would stop the flow of fuel oil to Western

Europe.

That got a quick response. Angela Merkel, the German chancellor whose term has just ended, got on the phone to Lukashenko and agreed to cool things down.

Washington wasn't happy with that outcome. And it immediately switched gears to the "Russian invasion of Ukraine" fairy tale - even though Ukraine had just made threatening moves toward Belarus on NATO's behalf!

Let's stop new imperialist war

A day before the Biden-Putin call, an unnamed U.S. official [told The Guardian](#) that Washington could send troops to eastern Europe. "It would certainly be the case that if Putin moved in, there would be an increasing request from eastern flank allies, and a positive response from the United States, for additional forces and capabilities and exercises to take place there to ensure the safety and security of our eastern flank allies in the face of that kind of aggression in Ukraine."

This threat didn't come up explicitly during the official conversation, but hung over it.

Then, shortly after the presidential call, [CNN filed a report](#) that preparations were underway at the Pentagon for a possible evacuation of U.S. civilians from Ukraine in the event of war.

These stories aren't objective journalism. They are thinly veiled and very public threats.

If the situation at the Ukraine-Russia border cools, it will only be temporary.

That's the real message behind NATO's one-two punch in Belarus and Ukraine. The antiwar movement, anti-imperialists and the whole working class must stay alert and

get ready to stop a war that could quickly expand to engulf the whole world.

The U.S. keeps pushing harder and harder. Officials in Russia, Belarus and Donbass have so far managed to skillfully deflect and blunt NATO provocations. But Washington does not let up.

And whatever Biden, the Pentagon generals and big capitalists behind them desire at this moment, they are playing with fire. The Ukrainian, Polish and Baltic fascists are just as volatile as the white supremacist who killed two Black Lives protesters and wounded another in Kenosha. And they are far better trained and armed than Rittenhouse - thanks to Washington.

There are no guarantees that they will continue to follow their bosses' orders if they grow impatient. And that could set off an international conflagration with tragic consequences for workers all over the world.

Now is the time to organize, educate and get ready to take the streets against the next U.S. war - whether it begins in Europe, Asia, Latin America or Africa.

U.S. hands off Ethiopia and Eritrea

written by Struggle - La Lucha
January 13, 2022







In more than 50 cities in the United States and hundreds around the world, marchers rallied on Nov. 21 to protest U.S. sanctions on Ethiopia and Eritrea and U.S. support for insurgents trying to overthrow Ethiopia's elected government. In New York City, hundreds marched from CNN headquarters at Columbus Circle to Fox News to protest biased corporate media coverage of the conflict.

SLL photos: Bill Dores



Honduras said enough and opened its doors to new hope

written by Struggle - La Lucha

January 13, 2022

Honduras went to the polls last Sunday amid a process of historic importance. People flocked to the polling stations, despite political violence and fears induced by the narco regime of outgoing President Juan Orlando Hernández (JOH).

Opposition candidate Xiomara Castro de Zelaya, from the Liberty and Refoundation Party (Libre), obtained more than 53 percent of the votes and was well ahead of pro-government Nasry Asfura, who got 34 percent of the ballots.

The merit of the leftist candidate, who is the wife of former President Manuel Zelaya (2006-2009), is extraordinary. She fought her way through the presidential election amid massive smear campaigns to disqualify her, and today, she retains her mettle despite desperate attempts by the Honduran far-right-wing who are now trying to brand the elections as fraudulent.

"The high citizen turnout will not let lie. It will be a decisive factor to consolidate my triumph," Castro tweeted this Tuesday.

Throughout Sunday, there were crowds and long lines at the polling stations due to the influx of people. The increase in participation was significant: this year, there was a 68 percent turnout of eligible voters, while in 2017, the figure reached 57 percent.

If the indicated trend is confirmed -which is most likely to happen-, the election result will mark the end of a twelve-year-long government marked by corruption, violence, insensitivity, and subservience to Washington.

Honduras said enough is enough. It had had enough of Hernández's administration, which has been plagued by allegations of fraud, corruption and embezzlement, scandals linking him and his family members to drug cartels, and ineptness to disaster situations, such as the pandemic and devastating hurricanes that hit the country.

Xiomara Castro's candidacy came as a breath of fresh air for a country submerged in poverty, violence, insecurity, and unstoppable migration, phenomena exacerbated by the effects of the COVID-19, geopolitical subservience to Washington, and drug trafficking. The number of migrant Hondurans fleeing the country due to the misery of JOH is unknown but it is in the tens of thousands and even as the election was taking place more migrant caravans were leaving Honduras. Hernandez's tenure will be known for how he made the country dangerous, hopeless and unlivable.

Although Castro did not present a detailed government program, she represents at the very least the reestablishment of the social and sovereign recovery projects promoted by her husband until 2009, when he was deposed by a coup d'état backed by the US and the Organization of American States (OAS).

She has a long way to go. This victory is just a first step, but an important one. "We turned 12 years of tears and pain into joy. The sacrifice of our martyrs was not in vain. We will begin an era of prosperity and solidarity through dialogue with all sectors, without discrimination and sectarianism," said Castro in her victory speech.

President Joe Biden's administration is showing signs of opposing Castro's victory. "But it will have no choice but to accept reality," as the Mexican daily *La Jornada* stated in an editorial. "Washington must rectify its ideological phobias so it won't promote the destabilization of the Central American nation. On the contrary, it must solve the disaster caused by U.S. interference during the Barack Obama Era."

The triumph of the opposition is undisputed, but a formidable task of national reconstruction lies ahead. "We have already made history. Now we must build the future," the new president assured.

Source: [Resumen Latinoamericano - English](https://www.resumenlatinoamericano.org/2021/07/15/la-victoria-de-fernanda-castro-en-nicaragua-que-significa-para-el-continente/)

